THE TOWN YOU BUILD YOURSELF!

TOWN BUILDER'S GUIDE

MAXIS KIDS

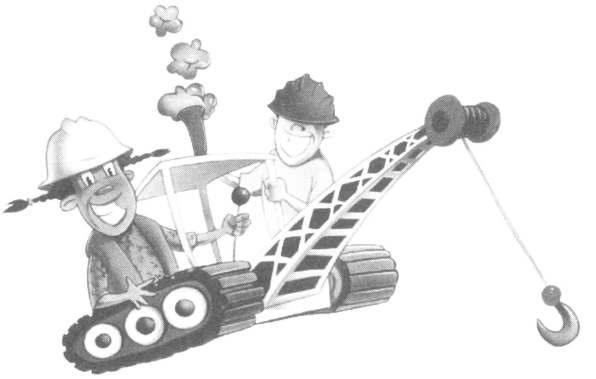
SIM town®

ages 6-10

The Town Builder's Guide to

SIM TOWN

THE TOWN YOU BUILD YOURSELF!



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Welcome to SimTown

SimTown is your town. It's yours to build, to play with and to take care of. You're the Town Builder—the boss. You're in charge.

You can build and run lots of different towns, each one different. There are three ways to build your towns:

1. You can start with empty land and build your own town from the ground up any way you want.
2. You can load in any of the included Starter Towns, take them over, and build them.
3. You can load in any of the Fixer-Upper Towns—towns with real problems—and try to turn them into nice places to live.

You can watch the Sims (the people who live in SimTown) work, play and travel around town. You can peek into their homes and see where they live. You can even design your own special Sims—one in each of your towns—and decide what they like to wear, eat, play, say and what kind of pet they own.

Of course, part of being in charge is being responsible. Your Sims need your help to run their town, to help it grow, and to make it a place they can be proud of. You'll be in charge of guarding the natural resources—the trees, water, air and crops. And be sure to recycle so your Sims aren't buried under their own garbage!

Most of all, you'll be in charge of having fun and experimenting and designing all kinds of towns, especially ones that you would like to live in—your dream town.

Becoming a Town Builder

Becoming a Town Builder is easy—and fun. Just follow these 18 steps, and you'll be ready to go off on your own and build the town of your dreams.

During these steps keep an eye on the way the words look.

> **Words printed like this are instructions for you to follow.**
>
> Words that are printed like this are explanations and background information.
>
> *Words that are printed like this are special hints, tips and warnings.*

Good luck—and have fun!

Step 1: Starting SimTown

SimTown is available for a number of different types of computers. Each computer has a slightly different way of doing things. In the SimTown box is a Quick-Start Guide that explains how to start SimTown on your type of computer.

SimTown can be played from the CD without any installation, but you can't save your towns onto the SimTown CD. You have to save them to a hard drive or a floppy drive. See your Quick-Start Guide for help with saving towns to disks.

Get the Quick-Start Guide and follow the instructions for starting SimTown on your computer. Once you see this Start-Up menu, you're ready for Step 2.

Step 2: Going to Town

Let's take a look at one of the Starter Towns. These are towns that have already been started for you to help give you a head start.

Move the mouse so the cursor on the screen points to the words "Starter Towns," then click the mouse button.

(Whenever this guide asks you to click on something, it means to point to it with the mouse, then click the mouse button.)

Next you'll see this:

Click on "Mixed Town."

Now you'll see this:

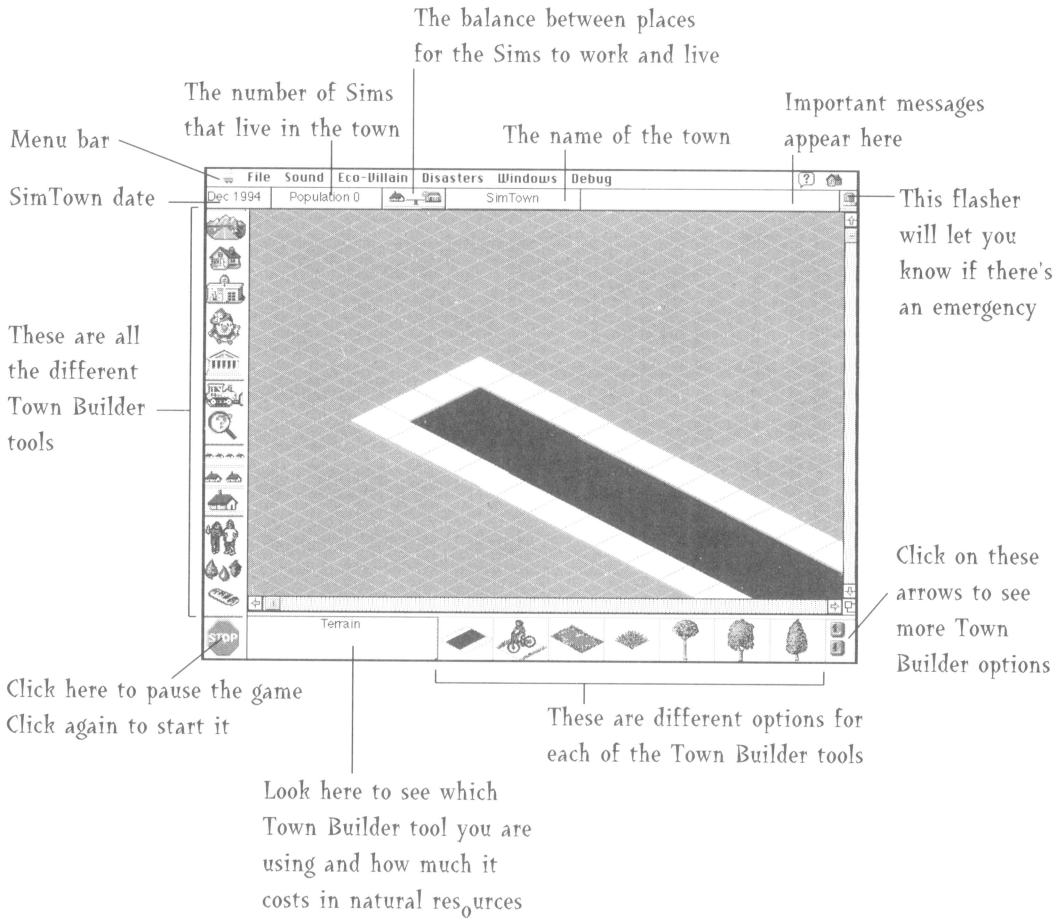
This is where you can name your town if you want to. We won't be staying in this town very long, and we won't be saving it to disk, so we won't bother renaming it. We'll stick with the default name, SimTown.

See the two buttons, Easy and Hard? You can play SimTown either way. For now, we'll choose Easy.

Click on "Easy."

Now you're looking at the Main SimTown screen. This is where you build your towns.

Take a minute to look at the different parts of the screen.


The balance between places for the Sims to work and live
The number of Sims that live in the town
Menu bar
The name of the town
Important messages appear here
File Sound Eco-Villain Disasters Windows Debug
SimTown date
Dec 1994
Population 0
SimTown
This flasher will let you know if there's an emergency
These are all the different Town Builder tools
Click on these arrows to see more Town Builder options
STOP
Terrain
Click here to pause the game
Click again to start it
These are different options for each of the Town Builder tools
Look here to see which Town Builder tool you are using and how much it costs in natural resources

Step 3: Tooling Around

Look closely at the Town Builder toolbar. Each tool has a special purpose.

These tools let you place different things in your town.

Terrain tool—for placing roads, bicycle paths, trees, grass, ponds, and other "outdoors" things in your town.

Home tool—for adding houses to your town so the Sims have somewhere to live.

Business tool—for adding stores, offices, factories and other places so the adult Sims have places to work.

Fun Place tool—for adding arcades, zoos, movie theaters and other fun places to your town.

Community Buildings tool—for adding important city buildings, like fire and police stations, libraries, medical centers and schools.

These tools let you modify and investigate your town.

Bulldozer tool—for removing buildings and other things from your town.

Investigate tool—for finding out more about each building, person and terrain area.

These buttons let you zoom in and out for different views of your town.

Far Away View—shows you your whole town at once.

Middle View—shows you your town at a medium view.

Close-Up View—shows you your town up close with the most details.

These buttons open other windows.

Designer Character button—opens the Designer Character window so you can create your own special Sim to live in your town.

Natural Resources button—opens the Natural Resources window where you manage your town's resources and garbage.

Newspaper button—opens a newspaper that tells you what's going on in your town.

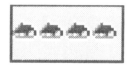
Click here to pause the game. Click again to start it.

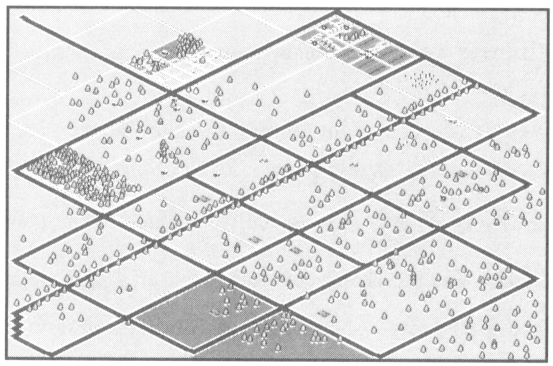
Step 4: Zoom and Scroll

You can look at towns in three different views:

1. The Far Away view shows everything in the town so small that you can't see the people—but it lets you see the whole town at once. You cannot build your town in this view, only look.
2. The Middle view lets you see a large part of the town, with more detail, and you can see the people. This is the best view for building.
3. The Close-Up view shows a small part of the town, where everything is big and visible. You can even go into the houses.

Let's look at the three views.

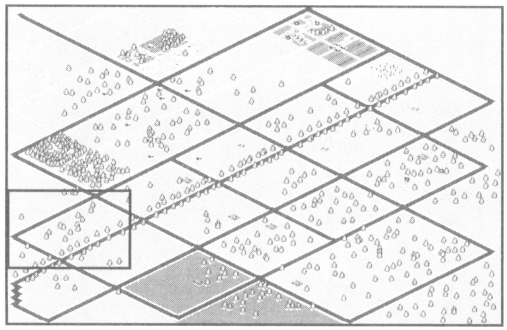
Click on the Far Away View button to zoom all the way out. 



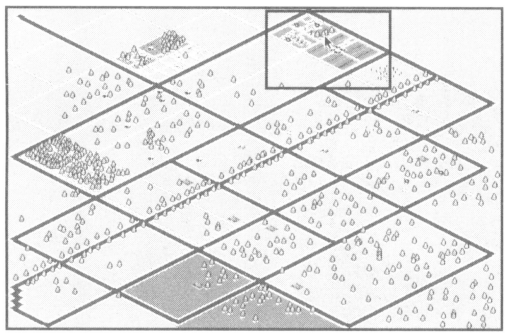
This is the best view for getting a look at your whole town. Everything is very small, but you can see every bit of your town, and you can see how much room you have left.

Click on the Middle View button.

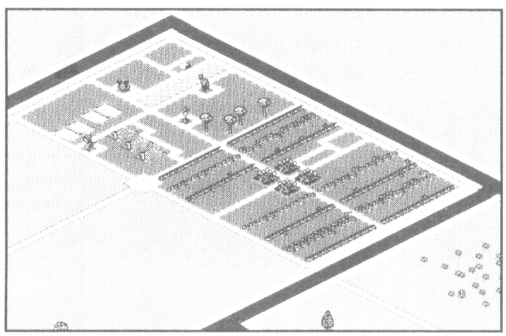
A yellow rectangle will appear in the town. This rectangle appears to show you the part of the town that will show when you zoom in to a closer view.



Move the mouse so the pointer is over the part of the town you want to see in the new view—the park near the top of the screen.



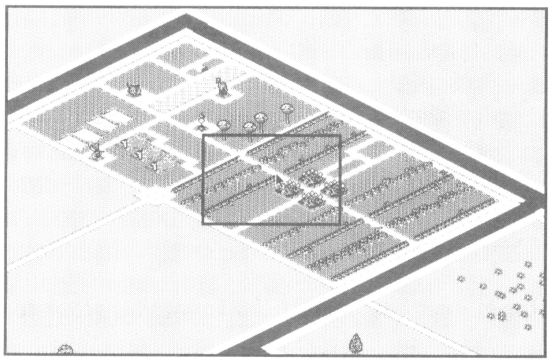
Click the mouse button to zoom to the middle view.



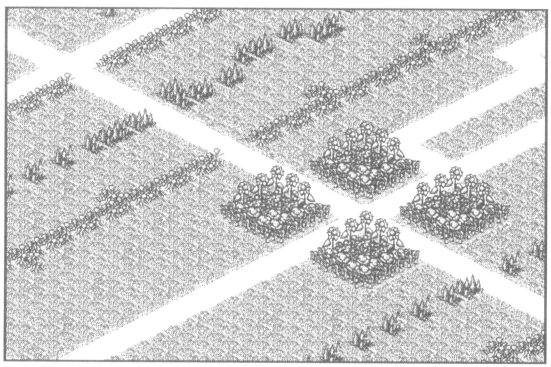
This is the best view for adding buildings, roads and terrain objects to your town.

Click on the Close-Up View button to zoom all the way in to the Close view.

When the yellow rectangle appears, move it to the center of the park.



Click the mouse button.

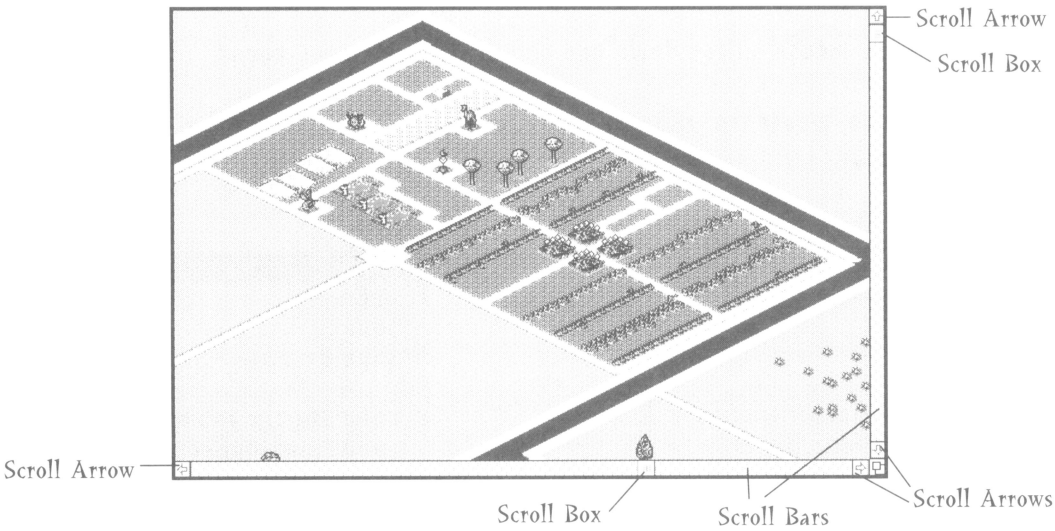


You are now zoomed all the way in to the Close-Up view. This is the best view to see building and people details and to explore inside houses.

Click on the Middle View button to zoom back to the Middle view.

Now we're back in the Middle view. When you zoom out (everything gets smaller) you don't have to use the yellow rectangle.

Even though we can't see all of the town, it's all still there. We can use the scroll bars to explore the rest of the town. There are two scroll bars. The scroll bar near the bottom of the screen lets you scroll the town left and right, by clicking on the arrows that point left and right. The scroll bar at the right side of the screen lets you scroll the town up and down, by clicking on the arrows that point up and down.



Click on the different scroll bar arrows to scroll the town around.

You can scroll even faster by clicking right on the scroll bar, instead of on the arrows. And you can also scroll by clicking and dragging the boxes in the scroll bars.

Click on the scroll bars to scroll the town quickly.

Click and drag the boxes on the scroll bar.

OK! You're ready for the next step.

Step 5: A Brand New Town

We're going to leave this starter town and start a brand new town. The first thing we'll need to do is learn how to use the menus.

Move the mouse so the pointer on the screen points to the word "File" in the menu bar at the top of the screen.

Press the mouse button down and hold it until the menu opens.

Move the mouse to slide the pointer until it highlights the word "New...."

Open the menu

Select "New..."

Release the mouse button.

You may be asked if you want to save this town before starting a new one. If so, click "Don't Save."

When the Name Your Town box opens, delete the word "SimTown" and type in "My Town."

Click on "Easy."

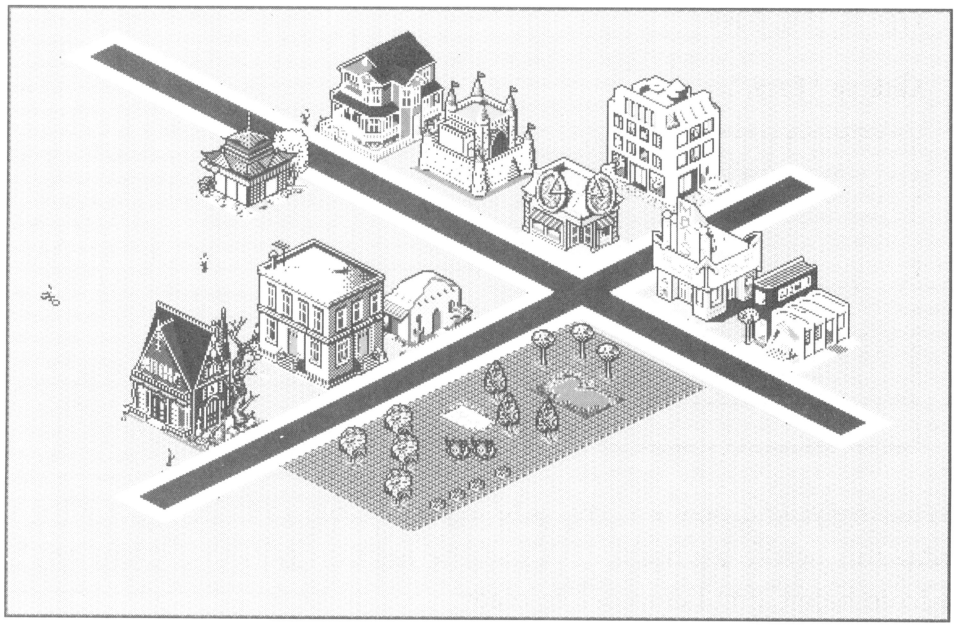
Menus are easy. And now we have a brand new town to build exactly the way we want. But before we build, let's use the menus again to prevent any surprises from happening before we're ready.

Open the Eco-Villain menu and select "Eco-Villain Off."

Open the Disasters menu and select "All Disasters Off."

Eco-villains and disasters can add a lot of fun and challenge to SimTown. You'll probably want to try them out later. But for now, while we're learning how to be a Town Builder, we'll keep things simple and not let the disasters and Eco-Villains bother us. Now, let's build!

Our town will look close to this when we're finished:



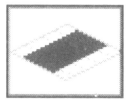
Here's what we're going to do in the next few steps to start our new town:

1. Build some roads.
2. Put a park with grass and trees in the town.
3. Put some houses, a pizza parlor, an office building and a movie theater in the town.
4. Add a library.

Step 6: Park Placing

Make sure you are in the Middle View.

Click on the Terrain tool.

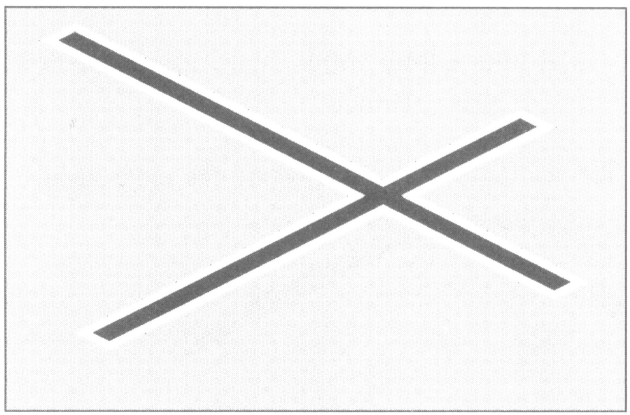
Click on the Road option at the bottom of the screen. 

Be sure to notice that some words appear near the bottom of the screen. These tell which tool option you are using (Road), and how much of your town's natural resources you use up when you build a road. We'll learn more about natural resources in SimTown later.

Move the mouse so the pointer is over the bare ground.

Did you notice that a piece of road is following?

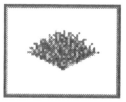
You can use the road like a stamp and put down some pieces of road one at a time, or click and drag slowly as if you were using a paint program. Place some roads so they look like this:



Note: Roads and a few other terrain parts can't be stamped just anywhere. They have to match up just right so the corners and intersections will line up. Don't get upset if a piece of road won't go exactly where you want it to go—just try another spot nearby.

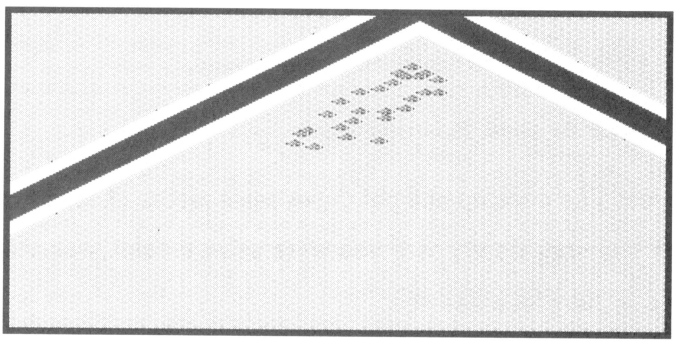
Now that we have our road, let's build a park. For our park, we'll need grass, some trees, a pond, some flowers, a sandbox, and something silly. Let's start with the grass.

Click on the Grass option at the bottom of the screen.



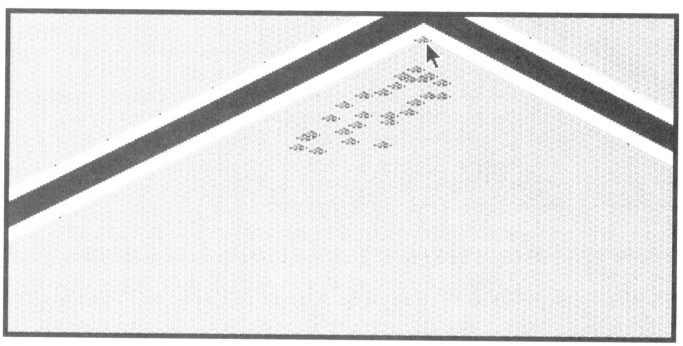
Move the pointer—now it is followed by a small patch of grass—into the town, below the roads.

Stamp down some grass below the roads, sort of like this—but it doesn't have to match exactly:



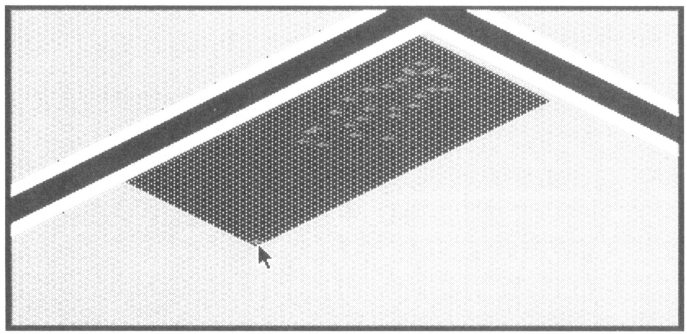
If we want a big park, this will take a long time. Lucky for us there's a short-cut for placing lots of patches of grass at once!

Move the mouse so the pointer is at the spot where the roads meet.

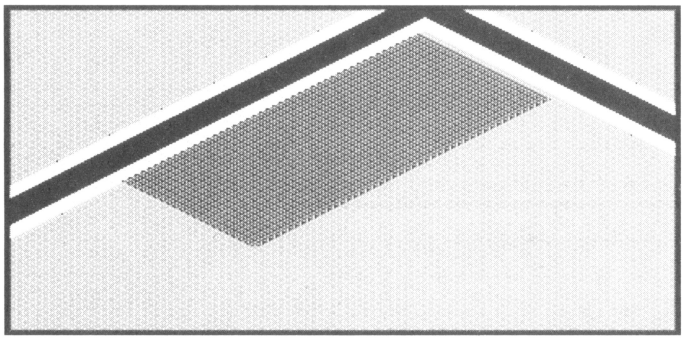


Hold down the Shift key on your keyboard.

Click and drag the mouse to make a rectangle on the screen like this:



Release the mouse button and the Shift key, and the rectangle will fill in with grass.



It's starting to look like a park. Now we need some trees.

Click on the Cherry Tree (the one on the left).

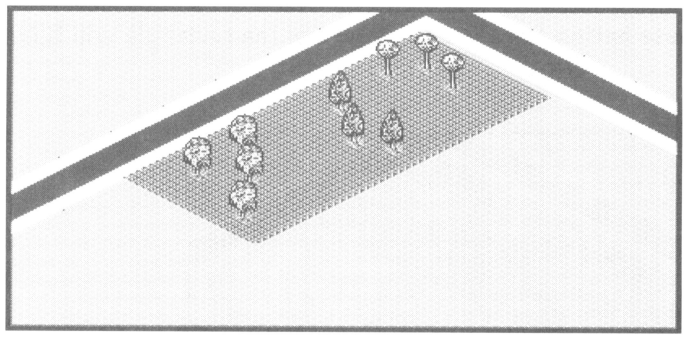
Stamp three or four of these trees in the park.

Click on the Walnut Tree (the middle tree).

Stamp three or four of these trees in the park.

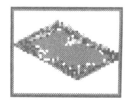
Click on the Pine Tree (the tree on the right).

Stamp three or four of these trees in the park.

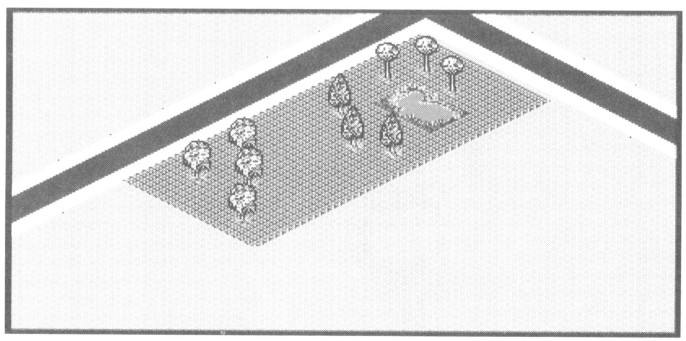


Now we have grass and trees in our park. Let's add a pond.

Click on the Large Pond option at the bottom of the screen.



Stamp a pond in the park.



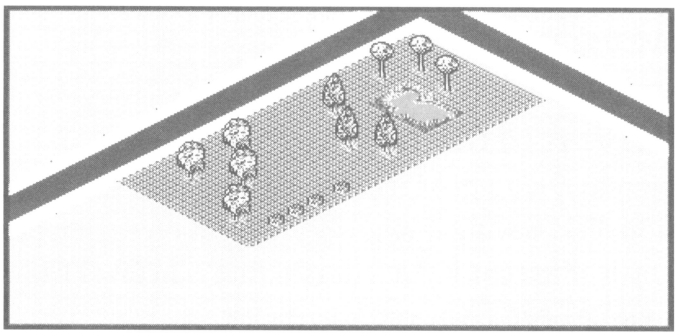
Now our park needs some flowers—but there aren't any flower options at the bottom of the screen! Don't worry, they're there. Look at the very lower-right corner of your screen and find the two arrow buttons.

Click on the arrow that points down.

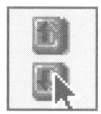
Now there is a whole new row of options for the Terrain tool—including flowers!

Click on the patch of Blue Flowers.

Stamp four or five patches of flowers in the park.



Now let's put in a sandbox.

Click on the down-arrow in the lower-right corner of the screen again. 

Click on the Sandbox.

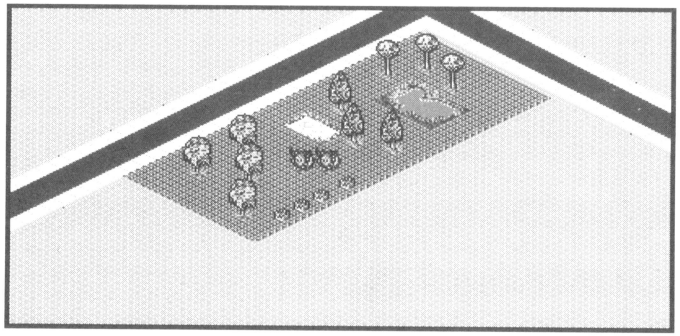
Stamp a Sandbox in the park.

Now one more thing to finish the park—something silly.

Click on the up-arrow in the lower-right corner of the screen.

Click on the Octopus Bush.

Stamp an octopus or two into the park.



Now the park is done. That was a lot of work, so before we put some buildings into our town, let's save this town to a disk.

Step 7: Saving a Town

Whenever you use a computer, it's a good idea to play it safe and save your work, in this case your town, to disk. Saving is slightly different on each type of computer. And saving is a little different if you are running SimTown from the CD than if you are running SimTown from your hard disk.

The Quick-Start Guide that came with SimTown will tell you everything you need to know about saving towns on your computer.

Get the Quick-Start Guide.

Follow the instructions in the Quick-Start Guide for saving files, and save your town (My Town) to disk.

Once the town is saved, put down the Quick-Start Guide and come back to this page.

Is your town saved to disk? Good. Now that we know our town is safe (well, at least saved), we can bring it back whenever we want.

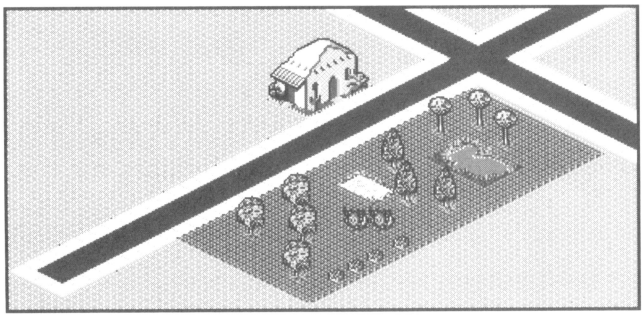
Step 8: A Place to Call Home

This town needs places for the Sims (the people who live in SimTown) to live—homes.

Click on the Houses tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

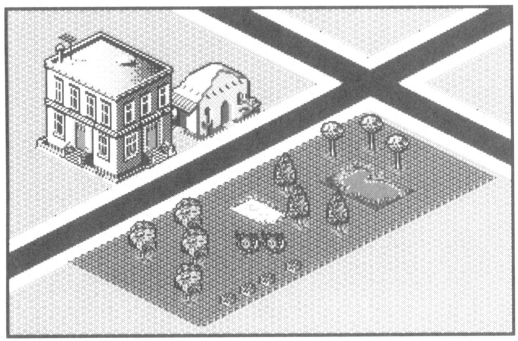
Click on the Adobe House at the bottom of the screen (the one on the left).

Stamp an Adobe House across the street from the park, as close to the street as you can.

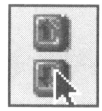


Click on the Apartment.

Stamp an Apartment near the Adobe House.

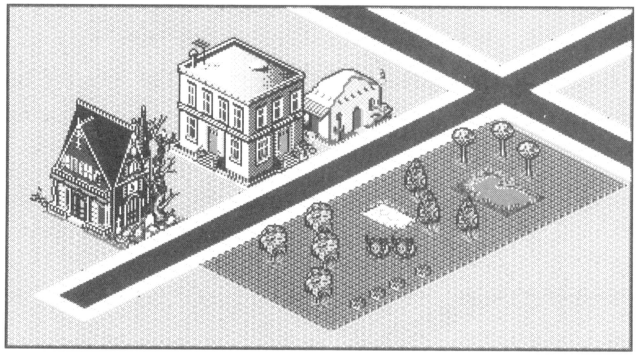


Click on the down-arrow in the lower-right corner of the screen.



Click on the Haunted House.

Stamp the Haunted House near the Apartment building.

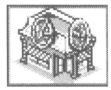


Now we have places for some Sims to live. Soon you will see Sims walking around the town and through the park. Next, we need places for the Sims to work.

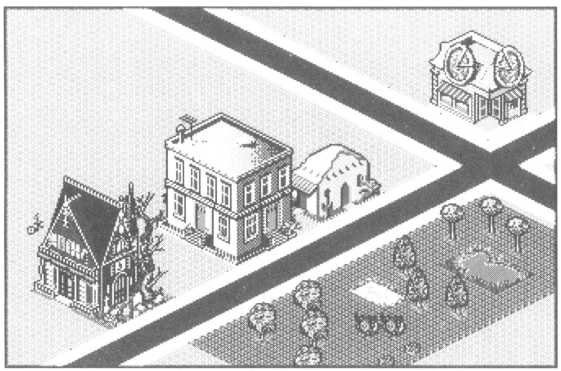
Step 9: Get a Job!

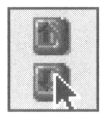
Our town needs businesses: how about a pizza parlor and an office building?

Click on the Businesses tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

Click on the Pizza Parlor at the bottom of the screen. 

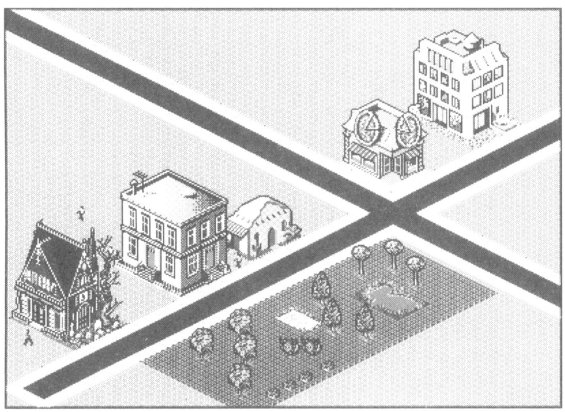
Stamp a Pizza Parlor in the town at the corner.



Click on the down-arrow in the lower-right corner of the screen. 

Click on the Office Building.

Stamp an office building near the Pizza Parlor.



That's enough businesses for now. Now, let's add something fun to our town!

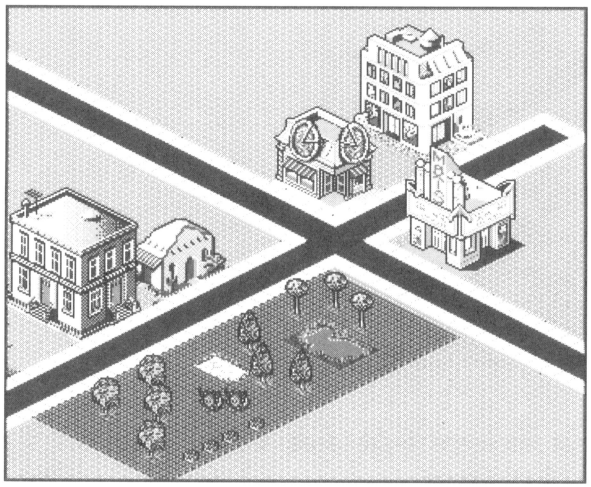
Step 10: Let's Go to the Movies!

Our town needs a movie theater where the Sims can all go to see fun movies.

Click on the Fun Places tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

Click on the Movie Theater at the bottom of the screen.

Stamp a Movie Theater across the street from the Pizza Parlor.



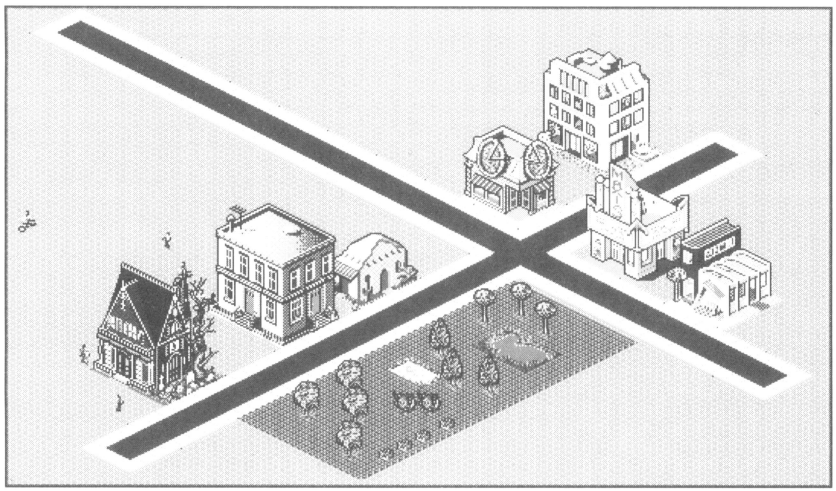
Step 11: Community Issues

There are special places and buildings in every town that make it a better community. Let's add a couple of those buildings.

Click on the Community Buildings tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

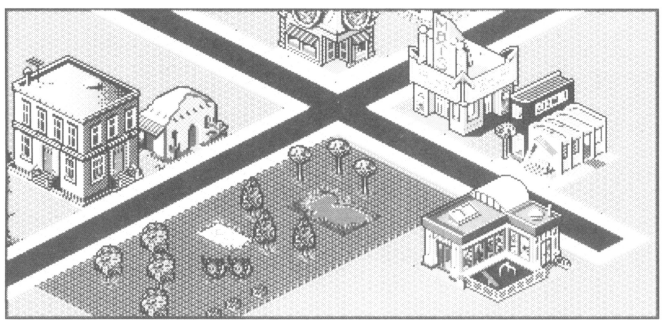
Click on the Library at the bottom of the screen.

Stamp a Library next to the Movie Theater.



Click on the School at the bottom of the screen.

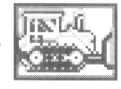
Stamp a School near the park.



Step 12: Bulldozer!

SimTown is a simulation. Simulations are models of real things, but they aren't real. One fun thing about simulations is that they let you do things you can't do in the "real world." Things like bulldoze your school.

Since we have to bulldoze something to test the bulldozer, we might as well bulldoze the school.

Click on the Bulldozer tool in the Town Builder's toolbar. 

Click on the School.

Boom! It's gone!

Warning! Don't try this with a real sch$_o$*ol!*

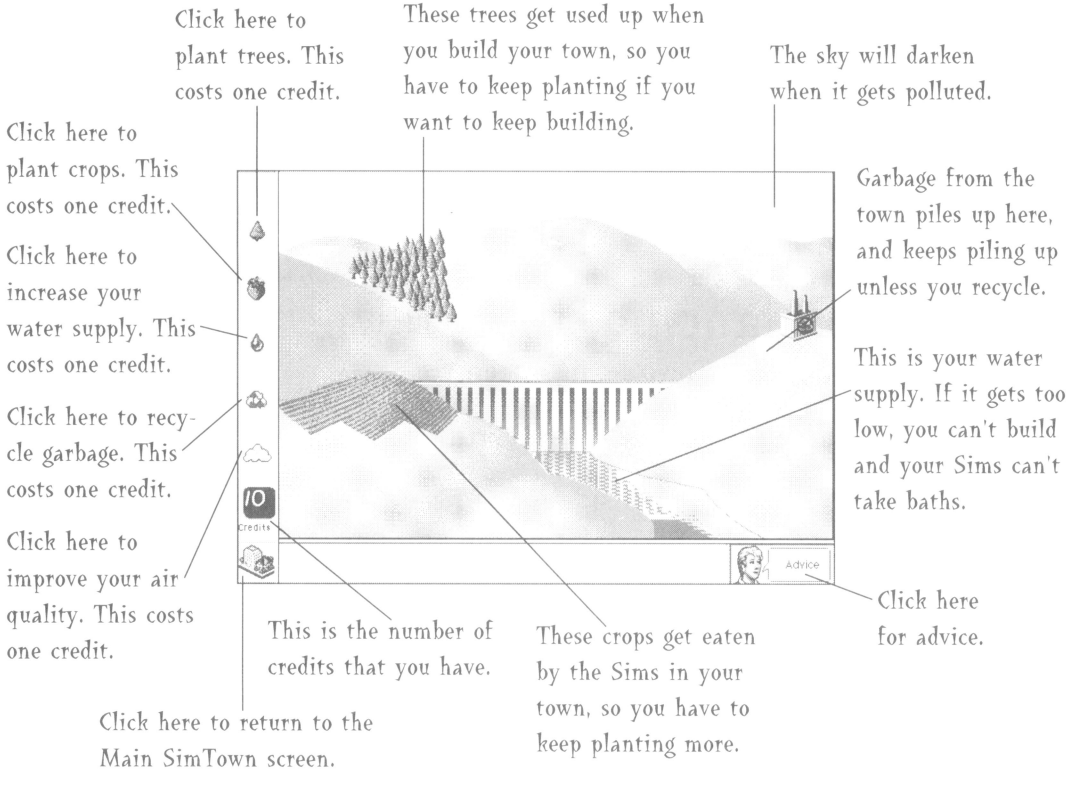
Step 13: Natural Resources

We already know that simulations aren't real (remember bulldozing the school?), but there are many things in SimTown that are like real towns. One of these things is that you have to preserve your natural resources and use them wisely.

Let's take a look at natural resources in SimTown.

Click on the Natural Resources tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

This is the Natural Resources screen.


Click here to plant trees. This costs one credit.
These trees get used up when you build your town, so you have to keep planting if you want to keep building.
The sky will darken when it gets polluted.
Click here to plant crops. This costs one credit.
Garbage from the town piles up here, and keeps piling up unless you recycle.
Click here to increase your water supply. This costs one credit.
This is your water supply. If it gets too low, you can't build and your Sims can't take baths.
Click here to recycle garbage. This costs one credit.
Click here to improve your air quality. This costs one credit.
10
Credits
Advice
This is the number of credits that you have.
These crops get eaten by the Sims in your town, so you have to keep planting more.
Click here for advice.
Click here to return to the Main SimTown screen.

Our town is new and small, so we don't have any pollution or garbage to worry about yet. But our natural resource supplies are low, so let's plant some trees and some crops, and raise our water level.

Click four times on the Plant Tree button.

Click twice on the Plant Crops button.

Click four times on the Increase Water button.

Did you notice that each time you clicked on a button, you used up one credit? You have to watch your credits carefully when you play SimTown, and only use them when you really need to.

Whenever you start a new town, you get some credits. Then, as time passes, you get more credits. You get more credits to use in an easy game than in a hard game.

Our work here is done. Time to go back to your town.

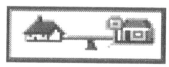
Click on the Return to the Main SimTown Screen button.

Step 14: Balancing Your Town

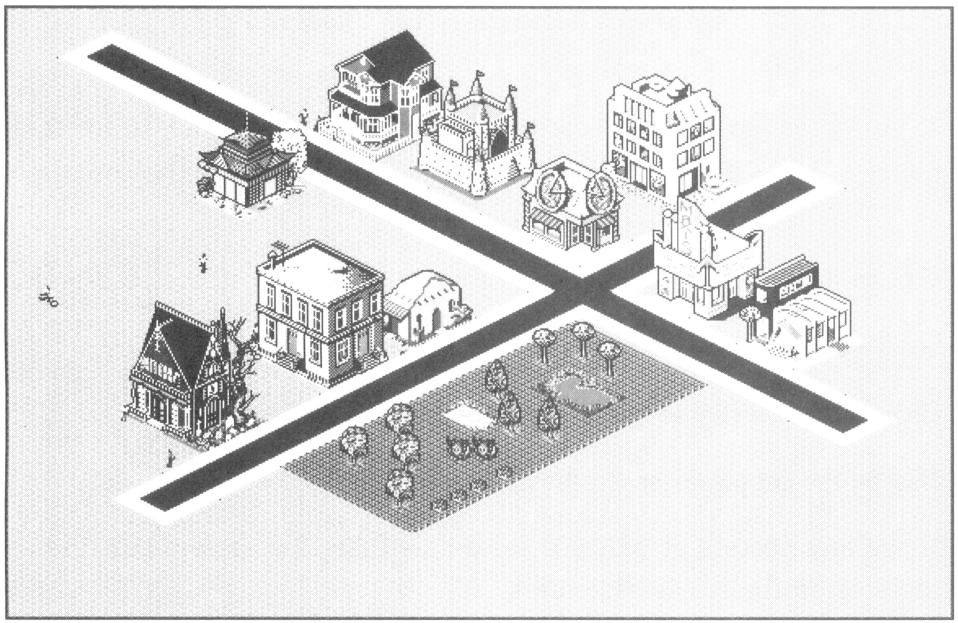
Now we're back in the SimTown Main screen.

Look at the House-to-Business balance near the top of the screen.

It is out of balance. The business side is too heavy. That means that we don't have enough people in the town to work in the businesses. We need more houses.

Add some more houses to your town at the top of the screen until the balance is level again. 

Add any kind of houses you want. Your town should look sort of like this:



Keeping your town balanced between houses and businesses is important. If you have lots of houses and not enough businesses, the Sims won't have anywhere to work. If you have lots of businesses and not enough houses, there won't be enough people to keep the businesses going.

Hint: It takes about ten people to support each business. Keep an eye on the Population box at the top of the screen.

Step 15: Fun Spots and Open Houses

Now we've got the beginning of a great town. Let's zoom in close, then use the Investigate tool to take a look around.

Different buildings have "fun spots," places where you can click to make fun things happen. You can find them in the Close-Up View with the Investigate tool.

Click on the Close-Up View button to zoom in to Close-up view.

Scroll so you can see the Movie Theater on your screen.

Click on the Investigate tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

Click on the ant poster on the Movie Theater.

Do you have any posters at home that can do that? See if you can find any more fun spots on the Movie Theater.

Houses have fun spots, too...and you can look inside of houses and see what's going on inside!

Scroll so you can see the Haunted House on your screen.

Click on the tree outside the Haunted House.

See if you can find any more fun spots on the Haunted House, then we'll go inside.

Double-click (click twice in a row, quickly) in the middle of the Haunted House.

Now you can see inside the house. There are fun spots inside of houses, too. See if you can find any (by single-clicking). When you're done looking around, close the house.

Double-click in the middle of the Haunted House to close it.

Note: You can only open up houses—none of the other buildings will open.

Step 16: How's Your Profile?

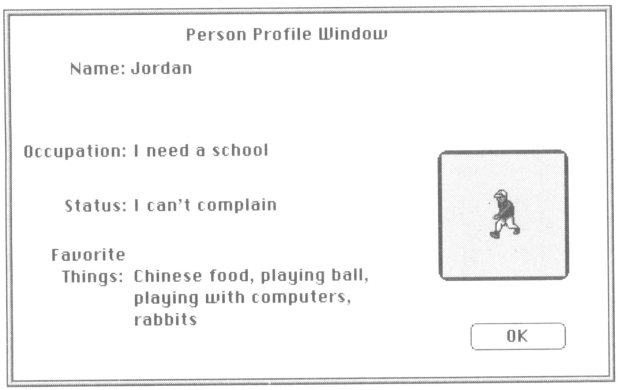
Besides finding fun spots and looking inside houses, the Investigate tool also lets you learn about the people, animals, buildings and terrain in your town. If you're going to build a town that's so nice that people want to live there, you'll need all the information you can get.

First, we'll investigate a person. Make sure the Investigate tool is active.

Click on the Stop button to pause time in your town, so the people will hold still.

Scroll until you find a person.

Click on the person.


Person Profile Window
Name: Jordan
Occupation: I need a school
Status: I can't complain
Favorite Things: Chinese food, playing ball, playing with computers, rabbits
OK

A little window pops up and tells you all about the person that you clicked on. It tells the person's name, their occupation (job) or school, their status (how happy they are) and lists their favorite things.

Click on the OK button to close the Profile window.

If you can find a pet, then try clicking on it to see its Profile window. If there's no pet in sight, don't worry. You can see a pet profile later. You can also see Profile windows for trees, grass, roads and other terrain items.

Note: To see Terrain Profile windows you have to hold down the shift key and click.

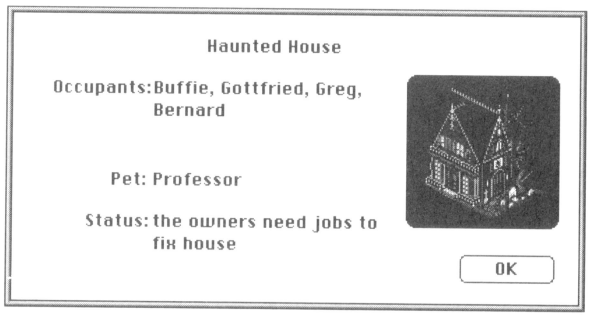
And you can see profiles for houses and other buildings, but opening a Profile window for a building or for terrain takes one extra step—you have to hold down the Shift key when you click on the building. Let's try it.

Make sure the Investigate tool is active, then:

Scroll until the Haunted House shows on your screen.

Hold down the Shift key on your keyboard.

Click on the Haunted House, then release the Shift key.



A Profile window pops up and tells you the name of the house, the names of the people who live there, their pet's name, and the house's status. Sometimes the status will tell you how happy the people are living in this house, and sometimes it will be a warning about things going wrong with the house.

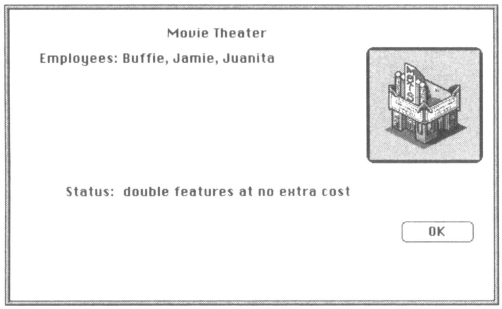
Click on the OK button to close the Profile window.

Let's try another building.

Scroll until the Movie Theater shows on your screen.

Hold down the Shift key on your keyboard.

Click on the Movie Theater, then release the Shift key.



Once again, a Profile window opens up and tells you all about the building.

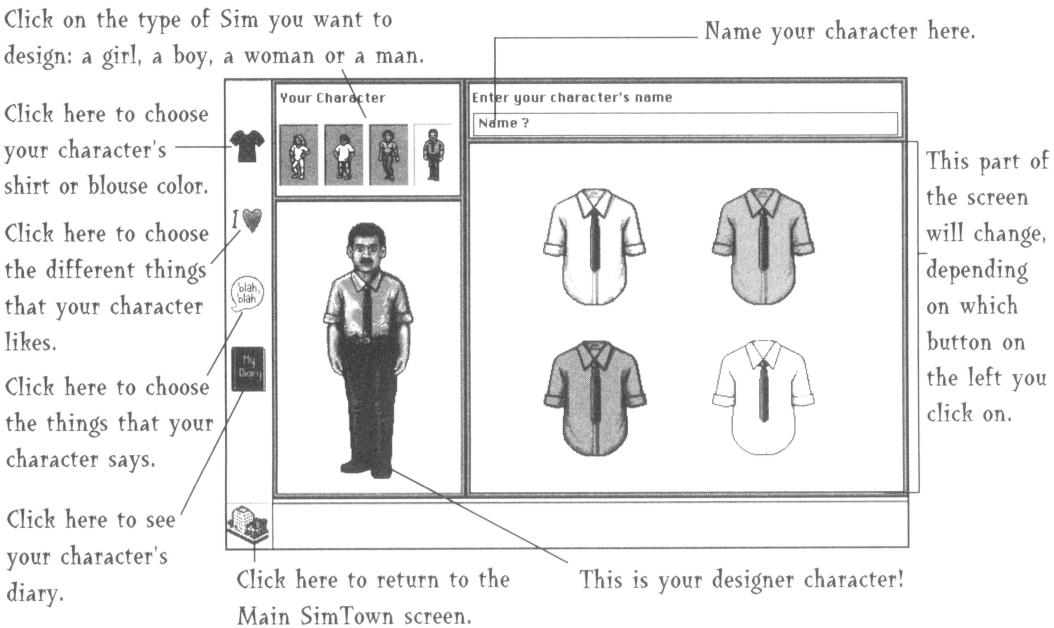
Click on the OK button to close the Profile window.

Step 17: Designer Characters

Every Sim in SimTown is different and special. Each one has a name, a job or school, and some favorite things. Besides the Sims that move into your town on their own, each town can have one special Sim that you design. Let's try it.

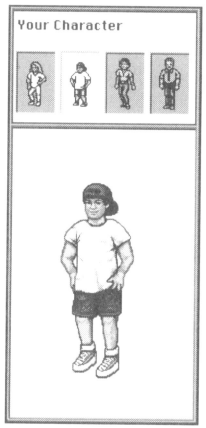
Click on the Designer Character tool in the Town Builder's toolbar.

You'll soon see this Designer Character screen.


Click on the type of Sim you want to design: a girl, a boy, a woman or a man.
Name your character here.
Your Character
Enter your character's name
Name ?
Click here to choose your character's shirt or blouse color.
Click here to choose the different things that your character likes.
Click here to choose the things that your character says.
Click here to see your character's diary.
This part of the screen will change, depending on which button on the left you click on.
Click here to return to the Main SimTown screen.
This is your designer character!

The first thing we need to do is pick what kind of person we want our character to be: a girl, a boy, a woman or a man. The pictures in this guide will show a boy, but you can make your character anything you want. It's up to you—you choose!

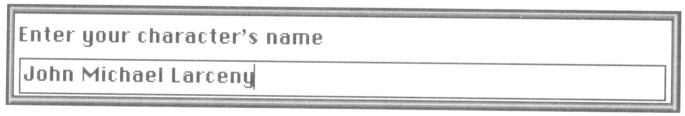
Click on the type of person you want your character to be.



Now we'll name our character. There is already something there, but it's only there to be a place holder until you choose a name you want. Of course, you can keep the place holder name if you want...but you can think up a better name than that!

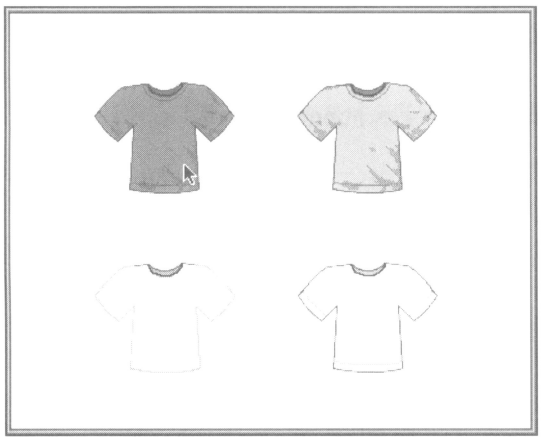
For the example in this guide, the boy will be named John Michael Larceny, but you can name your character anything you want.

Highlight the place holder name, and type in a new one.



Now we choose the character's shirt or blouse color.

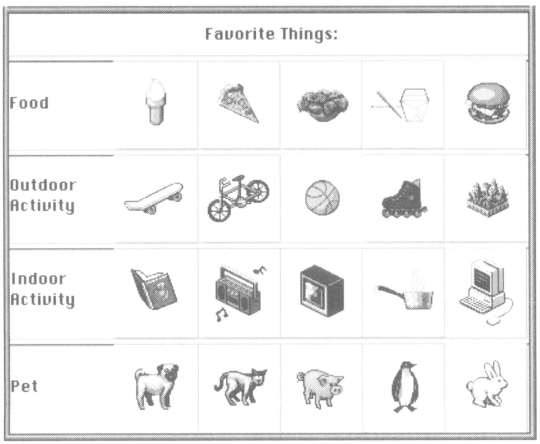
Click on the color of shirt or blouse you want your character to wear.



Now let's decide what our character likes.

Click on the I♥ button.

You can choose one food, one outdoor activity, one indoor activity and one pet for your character. Just click on your choices. If you change your mind, click on another choice.



Click to choose one food, one outdoor activity, one indoor activity and one pet for your character.

Now we'll pick things that your character likes to say. Remember, the examples printed here are just examples—you can choose anything you want. After all, it's your character!

Click on the Blah, Blah button.

Find the box below the words "When I'm happy I say:"

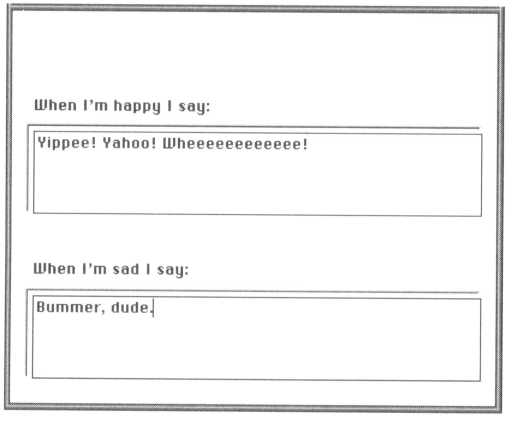
Click in that box.

Type in the happy words your character will say in their diary.

Find the box below the words "When I'm sad I say:"

Click in that box.

Type in the sad words your character will say in their diary.



Now let's look at your character's diary.

Click on the My Diary button.

There isn't very much there, is there? That's because your character is so new there hasn't been time to do anything to write in a diary. After a while, come back to the Designer Character screen and look at the diary.

OK! That's it. You've created a monster! (Well, you created a designer character, and that's close enough.)

The Designer Character will live in the next house you place. Now it's time to leave the Designer Character screen.

Click on the Return to Main SimTown screen button.

Step 18: The Newspaper

This is the last step! And it's really easy—just read a newspaper!

The newspaper helps you find out what's going on in your town. Whenever you aren't sure what to do next, or want to find out how your Sims are doing, look at the newspaper.

Click on the Newspaper button.

Click anywhere to close the newspaper.

This is the most important headline.

Read the biggest headline.

Click anywhere on the newspaper to close it.

What headline did you read? What did you learn from the headline? What do you think should you do about it? Whatever you do, it's up to you, because you're the Town Builder.

Farewell

You finished all the steps, and you now know a lot about building towns in SimTown. The best way to learn more is to play and explore. Play with all the tools and all the options for each tool. Explore the Starter towns and the Fixer-Upper towns. Try new things. Have fun!

Check out the Town Builder's Reference, later in this guide. It has explanations of all the menus and lots of hints and tips to better town-building.

And watch out for disasters and Eco-Villains! You never know when all your plans will be ruined by a natural disaster or a villain who wastes resources.

Remember, whenever you use a computer it is a good idea to save your work to disk often!

Town Builder's Reference

The Menus

File Menu

New... begins a new, empty town.

Open... opens a dialog box so you can load in a previously saved town. See the Quick-Start Guide for details on opening files on your computer.

Save... saves the current town to disk under the same name and in the same place where it was last saved. If it hasn't been saved before, the Save As... dialog box will open, allowing you to name the town and choose the disk and directory or folder to save the town in.

Save As... opens a dialog box that allows you to rename the town and choose a disk and directory or folder to save the town in. See the Quick-Start Guide for details on saving files on your computer.

Load Starter Town lets you load any of four different towns that you can use to get a jump start on building your own towns. See Starter Towns later in this guide for more details.

Load Fixer-Upper lets you load any of four different towns: No Water, No Crops, No Trees or Bad Air. These towns each have a problem that needs fixing. If you can fix the problem in time, you win. See Fixer-Upper Towns later in this guide for more details.

Page Setup... opens a dialog box where you can adjust the way your printer prints.

Print... opens a dialog box where you can choose options for printing your town. See the Quick-Start Guide for details on printing with your computer.

Preferences... opens a small window where you can make some choices on how SimTown works. See Preferences later in this guide for more details.

Quit ends the SimTown program.

Sound Menu

Sound Effects turns sound effects on and off. When it is on, there will be a check mark to the left of the words "Sound Effects" in the menu.

Music turns the music on and off. When it is on, there will be a check mark to the left of the word "Music" in the menu.

Song 1, Song 2 and Song 3 let you select which song will play if the music is turned on. The selected song will have a check mark next to it.

Note: Not all computers can play the music and sound effects.

Eco-Villain Menu

Timber Thief steals trees.

Food Pig eats up lots of your crops.

Water Hog drinks up lots of your water.

Litterbug produces lots and lots of garbage.

Air Polluter makes the air dirty.

Eco-Villain Off prevents the Eco-Villain from coming to your town.

Disasters Menu

Drought causes a water shortage in your town.

Earthquake shakes up the town and deteriorates some of the buildings.

Fire starts one building on fire. The fire will spread if you don't take care of it.

All Disasters Off prevents disasters from happening in your town.

Windows Menu

Main opens the Main SimTown screen.

Designer Character opens the Designer Character screen.

Natural Resources opens the Natural Resources screen.

Newspaper opens the Newspaper.

Awards opens the Awards window.

Find Designer Character locates the town's designer character.

Center Display on Mouse centers the screen on the spot you click.

Easy and Hard Games

Whenever you start a new town or open a Starter Town, you get to name it and decide whether the play level will be easy or hard.

There are four things that make the games easy or hard:

1. The amount of credits you get when you start a new town.

   In easy games you start with 10 credits.

   In hard games you start with 5 credits.

2. The amount of credits you get every month.

   In easy games you get 2 credits every month.

   In hard games you get 1 credit every month.

3. The amount of damage disasters cause.

   In easy games, fires are less likely to spread, earthquakes do less damage, and droughts cause water to cost twice as much as normal.

   In hard games, fires spread more quickly, earthquakes do more damage, and droughts cause water to cost three times as much as normal.

4. The amount of damage Eco-Villains cause.

   In easy games, each time an Eco-Villain comes to town he will steal 1 credit's worth of natural resources or add 1 credit's worth of pollution or garbage.

   In hard games, each time an Eco-Villain comes to town he will steal 2 credits' worth of natural resources or add 2 credits' worth of pollution or garbage.

Fixer-Upper Towns

There are four Fixer-Upper Towns that you can load. Each of these towns has a bad problem. Your job is to solve the problem within a certain amount of time. If you solve the problem in time, then you win. If you don't solve the problem in time, then you lose—but that's OK, you can always try again.

When you start a Fixer-Upper Town, a dialog box will open on the screen giving you information about the town, what you have to accomplish in order to win, and the amount of time you have to complete your tasks. The four Fixer Upper Towns are:

No Water is a medium-sized town with almost no water. You'll have to spend some credits on water right away, because once you run out, all your buildings will deteriorate. Next, you'll have to carefully manage all your resources and repair the town.

No Crops is a very large town that is almost out of crops. Once the crops are all gone, the people will start to move out of the town. You'll need to use credits on crops right away, but don't ignore your other resources.

No Trees is a town with no trees available in the Natural Resources window. (It will have some trees in the town, but these can't be used for building.) With no trees as natural resources, it can't grow, and buildings can't be built or repaired. You'll have to manage your credits, grow some trees, repair the deteriorated buildings and make the town bigger.

Bad Air is a big town with lots of roads and horrible air quality. You'll need to spend credits to clean up the air, then redesign the town to reduce pollution by taking out roads and replacing them with bicycle paths.

If you win, you will be notified of your great achievement, and you will be allowed to continue playing in the town. If you lose, you will be kicked out of the town by an angry mob. (But you can always try again!)

Saving Fixer-Upper Towns to Disk

If you save a Fixer-Upper Town to disk before the time limit is up, when you load it back in it will continue from where you left off. You can still win or lose.

If you save a Fixer-Upper Town to disk after you win, it will be just like a regular town.

Starter Towns

There are four Starter Towns. These are towns that have been started in different ways to help you get started with your own towns. When you load in a Starter Town, you name it anything you want, and choose either Easy or Hard.

Road Town has a framework of roads all ready for you, so you can spend your time building buildings and parks.

Park Town has lots of park land all ready for you, so you can concentrate on roads and buildings.

Bike Town already has a network of bicycle paths for you to build your town around.

Mixed has some roads, some bike paths and some parks, so all you need to add is buildings.

Unlike Fixer-Uppers, there is no time limit and no winning or losing in Starter Towns.

Natural Resources and Credits

Natural resources are just as important in SimTown as they are in a real town. One of the most important things that you do when you play SimTown is manage the natural resources. The way you manage them is with Credits.

You need to use Credits to increase your supplies of natural resources, and to clean the air and recycle the garbage.

In an easy game, you start with 10 Credits and get two more every month (in SimTown time, not real time). In a hard game, you start with 5 Credits and get one more every month.

The most Credits you can have at a time is 99.

You also win credits for winning awards:

- 10 Credits for Small Town of the Year,
- 20 Credits for Best Town in the State,
- 30 Credits for Best Town in the Nation, and
- 50 Credits for Best Town in the World.

Credits can only be used in the Natural Resources window.

For a complete description of SimTown's natural resources, and an explanation of how the simulation keeps track of them, see Inside the SimTown Simulation later in this guide.

Awards

Besides winning the Fixer-Upper Towns, there are four different awards that each town can receive. Awards are based on how well and how long you manage your town.

The four awards are:

- Small Town of the Year, for keeping a well-managed town for 6 months.
- Best Town in the State, for keeping a well-managed town for 1 year.
- Best Town in the Nation, for keeping a well-managed town for 2 years.
- Best Town in the World, for keeping a well-managed town for 4 years.

Every time you win an award, a dialog box will pop up and congratulate you. But there's more than mere congratulations—you also win extra Credits! If you win:

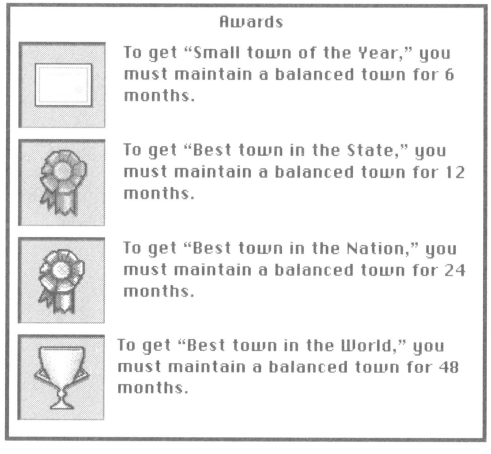
- Small Town of the Year, you receive 10 credits.
- Best Town in the State, you receive 20 credits.
- Best Town in the Nation, you receive 30 credits.
- Best Town in the World, you receive 50 credits.

If you have a badly managed month, then a different dialog box will pop up and tell you the bad news. If this happens, you won't lose any awards that you have already won, but to win more, you will have to start the count of well-managed months over. For example, if you already won the Best Town In the Nation award for 2 years of good management, then get a Bad Management warning, you will still have your Best Town In the Nation award, but you will have to start over and manage your town well for four whole years before you can win the Best Town In the World award.

For information on managing your town well enough to win awards, see Town-Building Hints and Tips later in this guide.

The Awards Window

The Awards window keeps track of your awards. You can see it by opening the Windows menu and selecting Awards.


Awards
To get "Small town of the Year," you must maintain a balanced town for 6 months.
To get "Best town in the State," you must maintain a balanced town for 12 months.
To get "Best town in the Nation," you must maintain a balanced town for 24 months.
To get "Best town in the World," you must maintain a balanced town for 48 months.

This window lists the four rewards, tells you which ones you've won, and tells you what you need to do to win the rest.

The Eco-Villain

The Eco-Villain is the bad guy. He appears every so often and either wastes natural resources or adds pollution. He has five aliases:

Timber Thief wastes your town's trees.

Food Pig wastes your town's crops.

Water Hog wastes your town's water.

Litterbug adds garbage to your town.

Air Polluter adds pollution to your town's air.

When the Eco-Villain comes to town, you'll be sent a message in the Message bar in the Main SimTown screen.

You can only see the Eco-Villain in the Natural Resources screen. He appears when you try to use Credits. For example, if he is loose in your town and is being a Water Hog, then the next time you use a Credit to increase your water supply, the Water Hog will appear and waste all the new water.

In an easy game, the Eco-Villain wastes 1 Credit's worth of natural resources or adds 1 Credit's worth of pollution or garbage. In a hard game, the Eco-Villain wastes 2 Credits' worth of natural resources or adds 2 Credits' worth of pollution or garbage.

The Eco-Villain appears randomly. You can also bring him to town as a challenge and to see how he will affect your town by opening the Eco-Villain menu and selecting the type of Eco-Villain you want.

If you don't want the Eco-Villain to visit your town, you can open the Eco-Villain menu and select "Eco-Villain Off."

Disasters

There are three natural disasters that can occur in SimTown:

Droughts are water shortages. They last for a random period of time, up to one year. While a drought is in progress, increasing your water supply is more expensive. In an easy game, it will cost 2 Credits for the amount of water that normally costs 1 Credit. In a hard game it will cost 3 Credits for the amount of water that normally costs 1 Credit.

Earthquakes shake up your town and deteriorate houses. The amount of damage that an earthquake causes is random, but it will usually do more damage in a hard game than in an easy game.

Fires burn buildings, and turn them to rubble. They can spread from building to building. Fires will spread twice as fast in a hard game than in an easy game. They also spread faster during a drought. Deteriorated buildings are most likely to catch on fire. Fires can't cross over roads, bike paths or empty

spaces larger than two tiles. (Tiles are the little squares that you see on the bare ground in the Middle and Close-Up views.) Fires near Fire Stations go out quicker. The only building that can't ever catch on fire is the Fire Station.

Disasters appear by themselves randomly. You can also set off disasters in your town as a challenge and to see how they affect your town by opening the Disasters menu and selecting the name of the disaster you want.

If you don't want any disasters to happen in your town, you can open the Disasters menu and select "All Disasters Off."

Town-Building Hints and Tips

Here are some hints and tips to help you be a better Town Builder.

General Hints and Tips

- Place roads and bike paths before you place buildings.
- Play through all 18 steps to Becoming a Town Builder.
- Remember: there are three different views. Use the Far Away view to see the whole town and make your long range plans. Use the Middle view for placing roads and buildings. Use the Close-Up view for exploring, looking for fun spots and investigating the people, houses and businesses.
- Watch the Message bar for important messages and warnings.
- Read the Newspaper regularly.
- Watch the House-to-Business Balance at the top of the screen, just below the Menu bar.
- The more roads you have, the more traffic there will be. And the more traffic there is, the more polluted your air will get. So be careful not to place more road tiles than you really need in your town.

- If you want to fill a large area with grass without stamping down each tiny grass square one by one, you can use this shortcut:
    1. Click on the Terrain tool in the Tool Builder's toolbar.
    2. Click on Grass at the bottom of the screen.
    3. Hold down the Shift key.
    4. Click and drag to form a rectangle where you want to grass to grow.
    5. Release the mouse button.
- Use the Investigate tool often. Click on any Sim or Shift-click on any building or on terrain to open a Profile window.
- Fires won't cross over blank areas, so if you have a fire, bulldoze around the burning object to create a firebreak that is as least two tiles wide. (Tiles are the little squares that you see on the bare ground in the Middle and Close-Up views.) Fires won't cross over roads or bike paths, so don't bother bulldozing them when you are making a firebreak.
- As a fire safety precaution, leave blank areas between houses, or at least some space with grass or trees that can be bulldozed as a firebreak. That way you won't have to bulldoze anyone's home or workplace.
- Vegetable Gardens produce food for your Sims the same as crops in the Natural Resources screen. Placing 16 Vegetable Gardens supplies as much food as 1 Credit's worth of crops. But remember: Vegetable Gardens cost water to build and maintain, so don't place too many of them.
- Sometimes computer programs have built-in hidden surprises called Easter Eggs. You usually type in a special word or secret code to "crack" the Easter Egg. For a sample Easter Egg, type USPA87419 while SimTown is running.
- The girl gathering letters off the bottom of the pages of this guide is helping you find Easter Eggs. Can you unscramble the letters that she's gathered?
- Read the Inside the SimTown Simulation section, later in this guide.

Managing Your Town to Win Awards

There are two things to master if you want to manage your town well:

1. Managing your natural resources so you don't run out and don't get too polluted or buried in garbage.
2. Keeping your town balanced.

Managing Natural Resources

Remember to check the Natural Resources screen often, so you don't run out of resources.

Check with your Advisors in the Natural Resources window. They are there to help.

Read the section Natural Resources and Credits above, and Natural Resources (and Pollution) later in this guide.

Keeping Your Town Balanced

Keeping your town balanced is different in a small town than in a large town. In a small town, the trick is to balance the number of houses and the number and types of businesses. The House-to-Business Balance at the top of the screen, just below the Menu bar, will tell you whether you need more houses or businesses.

Your goal is to keep the number of jobs and the number of working people (adults) within 10% of each other. That means if you ever have more than 1 out of 10 of the jobs unfilled, or more than 1 out of 10 of the people without jobs, you had better add jobs or people, fast! On the average, you'll need about three houses per business. Be sure not to have too many of a particular type of business or building.

As a town gets bigger, there are enough houses, people and businesses that the house-to-business balance is fairly easy to maintain. But with so many buildings, the maintenance costs—crops and water—really add up. So now the problem is keeping the balance between town size and available resources. At this point, be sure to keep enough water and crops to maintain your town or buildings will deteriorate.

The bigger the town, the more often you'll need to check the Natural Resources window. You will also have to be very careful not to grow your town too fast, or you'll run out of credits.

Inside the SimTown Simulation

Here is an explanation of the SimTown simulation—what's going on inside the computer. If you read and understand this, it will help you to be the best you can be at playing SimTown.

The Elements of SimTown

There are four elements, or basic parts to any town you build in SimTown:

- Buildings
- Terrain
- Natural Resources (and Pollution)
- People (the Sims)

Here's an explanation of each of the elements:

Buildings

SimTown has four different types of buildings: houses, businesses, fun places and community buildings. But inside the computer—in the simulation—there are only two types of buildings: houses and "other." All the businesses, fun places and community buildings are grouped together.

While there is a difference between an Office Building and a Pizza Parlor to you as a Town Builder (and as a hungry person looking for lunch), as far as the computer cares, they are the same. First let's look at how houses are treated in the simulation, then we'll look at the "others."

Houses

In the SimTown simulation, when you place a house, you automatically place the people who live there. As long as a house is there, there will be people living there.

If you have a lot of houses, your town will have a lot of people. If you have a lot of people, you'll need a lot of places for the people to work (other buildings). If you have too many houses and not enough other buildings, then you will have unemployment, which will cause houses to deteriorate because the people in the houses won't have jobs and won't be able to afford to keep their houses fixed up.

When houses are built, trees and water are used up. The amount of trees and water that is used depends on the size of the house. The cost to build a house is shown on the screen whenever that house is highlighted at the bottom of the screen and ready to place.

After a house is built, the people who live there need both water and food (crops) to live and maintain the house. If there is no water or if there are no crops, the house deteriorates. Fixing a deteriorated house uses trees and water. Once there are enough trees and water, houses will automatically be fixed up, but it will take a month or two before they are finished.

Houses produce garbage every month.

Deteriorated houses have no fun spots on their outsides. You can open them and look inside, but there are no fun spots inside either. People don't move out of their houses when they deteriorate, but if you leave houses deteriorated too long, they will burn down. *Then* the people will move out.

"Other" Buildings

When you place a building (other than a house) you create jobs. As long as a building is there, there will be open jobs for adult Sims.

If you don't have enough jobs for your Sims, there will be unemployment. On the other hand, if you don't have enough Sims to work at your businesses, then the businesses will deteriorate.

When buildings are built, trees and water are used up. The amount of trees and water that is used depends on the size of the building. The cost to build a building is shown on the screen whenever that building is highlighted at the bottom of the screen and ready to place.

After a building is placed, the people who work there need water to drink and maintain the building. If there is no water, the building deteriorates. Fixing a deteriorated building uses trees and water. Once there are enough trees and water, buildings will automatically be fixed up, but it will take a month or two before they're finished.

All buildings produce garbage every month.

While a building is deteriorated, its chance of catching on fire increases. If a building stays deteriorated long enough, it will catch on fire and burn down, leaving nothing but rubble. These fires can spread and burn down the whole town if you're not careful.

After a building burns down, you can bulldoze the rubble to clear it away, or build over it. Either way, the rubble has to go somewhere...and that's to the garbage pile in the Natural Resources window.

Another thing about these "other" buildings that is important in SimTown is their support population. Because they are businesses (remember: the fun places and community buildings are the same as businesses inside the simulator), they compete with each other for employees and for customers.

The support population of a building is the number of people that a particular type of building can support. If you have more of a particular type of building

than the population needs and can support, its business will be bad and it will deteriorate.

Let's look at a Pizza Parlor as an example. The support population of a Pizza Parlor is 10 people. That means the support population for two Pizza Parlors is 20 people. If your town has two Pizza Parlors and only 15 people, then the business will be divided between them, and both Pizza Parlors will suffer and deteriorate. If your town has 30 people, it can support three Pizza parlors.

Remember: support population numbers are for a single type of building. Let's look at another example: a town with a Pizza Parlor and a Chinese Restaurant. (The support population is 10 for a Chinese Restaurant, too.) If your town has 15 people, it could support one Pizza Parlor and one Chinese Restaurant—but not two of the same kind of restaurant.

The kinds of buildings and business can be similar, as long as they aren't the exact same building. This means that you can make special "theme" towns, like:

- Food Town—a town that only has houses, restaurants, and a Grocery Store—as long as you don't have too many of the exact same kind of restaurant.
- Fun Town—a town that has only houses and fun places—as long as you don't have too many of the same fun places.
- Other theme towns that you like—as long as you don't have too many of the same types of buildings.

Terrain

Everything you can place in SimTown that isn't a house or other building is considered terrain. This includes roads, bike paths, grass, trees, flowers, vegetable gardens and all the other things that you place with the Terrain tool.

All terrain objects use water when they are built, and need more water every month to be maintained. If there is no water, then terrain objects will deteri-

orate. (Except Roads—they don't use any water for maintenance and don't deteriorate.) Once there is water again, deteriorated terrain objects will automatically be fixed (using up some water). Terrain objects take up a month to be fixed.

There are two terrain objects that affect the simulation in important ways: roads and vegetable gardens.

The more roads you have, the more traffic there will be. And the more traffic there is, the more polluted your air will get. So be careful not to place more road tiles than you really need in your town.

Vegetable gardens grow food that can be eaten by the people of the town. So planting a lot of them is like adding crops in the Natural Resources window. (And they look nice, too.)

Natural Resources (and Pollution)

SimTown has three natural resources: trees, water and crops. There are also two forms of pollution: air pollution and garbage. Here's a general explanation of how each of these affects SimTown.

Trees

Trees are used up whenever you place buildings. They are also used up to repair buildings that have deteriorated. The amount of trees that are used up depends on the size and type of building. The trees in the town can't be used for building or maintenance—only the trees in the Natural Resources screen.

If you run out of trees, you can't place any buildings, and buildings that are deteriorated cannot be repaired.

New trees only grow when you use Credits to plant them in the Natural Resources window. Trees you place in the town don't affect the Natural Resources window.

Water

Water is used up whenever you place buildings or terrain objects. It is also used by the people in the houses and businesses every day. So even if you stop building things, your water will run out if you don't regularly increase the supply. The amount of water used depends on the type of building and the number of people that work or live there. Keeping too much garbage in the garbage dump for too long can lead to your water being polluted. Polluted water gets used up twice as fast.

If you run out of water, buildings will deteriorate very quickly.

The water supply can only be increased when you use Credits in the Natural Resources window.

Crops

Crops are the food for the people in the town. The more people in the town, the faster the crops are eaten. Crops are sensitive to air pollution—if your air is too polluted, the crops will become unhealthy and it will take twice as many crops to feed your people.

If you run out of crops, buildings will deteriorate (because the people are too weak from hunger to fix them up).

The crop supply can only be increased when you use Credits in the Natural Resources window.

Air Pollution

Air pollution is caused by cars. In SimTown, the number of cars depends on the amount of roads you have. So, the more roads there are in a town, the faster the air will be polluted.

If the air is too polluted for too long, your crops will become unhealthy.

The only way to clean up polluted air is by using Credits in the Natural Resources window. If you place Bike Paths instead of Roads you will encourage the people in your town to ride bicycles instead of driving, and the air won't get polluted as quickly.

Garbage

Garbage is generated by the people in the buildings. The more buildings you have, the more garbage you get. Garbage is also added to the pile whenever you bulldoze rubble or place new things over rubble.

If the garbage piles up too high for too long, it will start to pollute your water supply.

The only way to get rid of garbage is to recycle it by using Credits in the Natural Resources window.

People (The Sims)

There are four types of people that live in SimTown: girls, boys, men and women. They're normal people just like the ones that live in your town...except they're very small and live in computers.

The Sims move into town when you build houses. They stay until the houses are destroyed (by fires or bulldozing).

Adult Sims go to work—if there are enough jobs in the town. Kid Sims go to school—if there is a school.

If your town doesn't have enough crops, the Sims will get weak from hunger and won't be able to maintain their houses. When that happens, the houses will deteriorate.

To find out about each of the Sims, click on them with the Investigate tool to open the Sim's Profile window.

Each Sim has a name and an occupation (adults have jobs if there are enough to go around, kids are students if there are schools). They also have favorite things: their favorite food, favorite outdoor activity, favorite indoor activity and favorite pet.

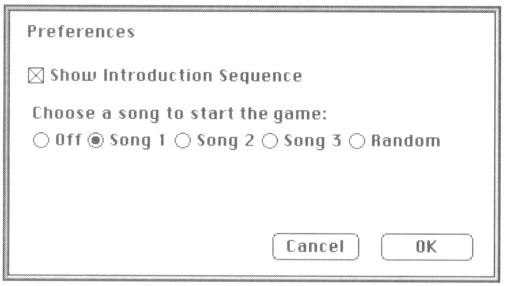
You can also find out a Sim's Status in the Profile window. The Status is how they are feeling or what they are thinking. Sims get sad and upset if they don't

have jobs (adults), if they don't have a school to go to (kids), or if their houses are deteriorated.

Besides the Sims that move into town when you build houses, each town can have one special Sim that you design. You can design your Sim in the Designer Character screen. See Step 17: Designer Characters earlier in this guide.

Preferences

The Preferences dialog box lets you modify the way SimTown starts:



Show Introduction Sequence lets you choose whether or not to show the introduction screens when the game starts.

Choose a song to start the game: lets you choose the music that plays when SimTown starts. The five possible options are:

- Off—No music plays
- Song 1—Song 1 plays
- Song 2—Song 2 plays
- Song 3—Song 3 plays
- Random—Song 1, 2 or 3 is picked randomly and plays

Appendix: Maxis and Home Learning

We at Maxis believe in learning through open-ended play. We take the "building block approach" to software rather than the "jigsaw puzzle approach."

Given ten building blocks, you can stack them all neatly one on top of the other, tier them to make steps, put them in a square to make a box, pile them randomly, or just leave them separate. You can do whatever you want—there's no winning, just investigating the possibilities and exploring.

Given a ten-piece jigsaw puzzle, you can stack the pieces, but you'd be missing the point, which is fitting the pieces together as they belong, and as everyone else has done before you and will do after you. You would have done nothing new, innovative, original, or creative by putting together the jigsaw puzzle. And having completed it, you probably wouldn't ever do it again because you had succeeded in meeting the challenge.

Maxis Software Toys for Kids give children the tools they need to explore the worlds they might have only imagined. Through a fun, colorful, and lively interface, children are encouraged to explore and create. Again and again they will return to the challenge of bettering what they have done. Their reward is a creation uniquely theirs—they own it and respond to it with a sense of ownership. This open-ended exploration captivates children, who bask in the power of building and creating—and succeeding on their own. This is when learning really happens.

With three distinct elements—entertainment, learning and creativity—combined in each of our products, our children's software doesn't fit neatly into any established software category. But that's OK. After all, blurring the line between fun and learning is what Software Toys for Kids is all about.

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